

9 Past Simple (I ate) or Present Perfect (I have eaten)(1)

- 1** We can use the Past Simple, but not the Present Perfect, to ask questions with **What time?**, **When?** etc, and to make statements about when things happened (e.g. **at 5 o'clock, in 1977**):

A: *What time **did** the plane **land**?*

(Not *What time has the plane landed?*)

B: *It **landed** at 5 o'clock.*

(Not *It has landed at 5 o'clock.*)

past 3 4 5 6 7 **now**

It landed.

A: *When **did** Elvis Presley **die**?*

(Not *When has he died?*)

B: *He **died** in 1977.*

(Not *He has died in 1977.*)

- 2** We also use the Past Simple if other expressions set the event in past time:

*When I was in the army, I **had** a terrible time.*

(Not *I've had...*)

*I **was** almost back home when the storm started.*

- 3** We describe a past action or event with the Present Perfect to show that it is relevant now. The time of the action is not important.

*Ann **has broken** her arm.*

(= It is now broken.)

*Bill **has made** the salad.*

(= The salad is now made.)

The Past Simple does not imply anything about the situation now:

*James **broke** his arm last year.*

*Kate **broke** her arm yesterday.*

From this information we expect, of course, that James's arm is all right now, but that Kate's arm is still broken.

- 4** We introduce an event with the Present Perfect, but we continue to talk about it with the Past Simple:

A: *Ann's **broken** her arm.*

B: *How **did** she **break** it?*

A: *She **fell** onto some rocks.*

- 5** For a very recent event we can use the Present Perfect with **just** or the Past Simple with **ago**:

*John **has just gone** out.*

*John **went** out a few minutes **ago**.*

Note that we use **just** before the past participle (e.g. **gone**).

Practice

- A** Complete the sentences with the correct form of a verb from the box.

die go write marry paint win

- 0 Bob Dylan wrote 'Blowin' in the Wind' in 1962.
- 1 Mark Spitz _____ seven Olympic gold medals in 1972.
- 2 Pablo Picasso _____ 'Guernica' in 1937.
- 3 Marlene Dietrich _____ to Hollywood in 1930.
- 4 Louis Armstrong _____ in 1971.
- 5 Diana _____ Prince Charles in 1981.

- B** Use the words in brackets () to complete the sentences.

- 0 When I was at school, (I/not/like/history) I didn't like history.
- 0 (My mother/be/at work) My mother was at work when the explosion happened.
- 1 (I/meet/Brian) _____ when we were in the army.
- 2 (I/be/in the garden) _____ when you phoned.
- 3 When Sam was young, (she/love/swimming) _____

- 4 (I/buy/these shoes) _____ when I was paid last week.
- 5 When Neil was sixteen, (he/have/very long hair) _____
- 6 When he saw her, (he/smile) _____

C If the first sentence is true, do we know that the second sentence is true?

Write **Yes** or **Don't know**.

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 0 John grew a beard. | John has a beard now. | <u>Don't know.</u> |
| 0 Bob has grown a moustache. | Bob has a moustache now. | <u>Yes.</u> |
| 1 Ruth went to Italy. | Ruth is in Italy now. | _____ |
| 2 Sarah has opened the door. | The door is now open. | _____ |
| 3 Ian has gone abroad. | Ian is abroad now. | _____ |
| 4 Bill opened the windows. | The windows are open now. | _____ |

D Complete these dialogues using the words in brackets. Use the Present Perfect or the Past Simple.

- 0 A: Why are you crying?
B: Look. (I/cut/my hand) I've cut my hand.
A: (How/it/happen?) How did it happen?
- 1 A: Is that a telegram?
B: Yes. It says that (Jane/have/a baby boy) _____
A: (When/she/have/the baby?) _____
- 2 A: Why are you looking so cross, Jeff?
B: Look. (Mary/break/my camera) _____
A: (How/she/break/it?) _____
- 3 A: What's the problem, Jason?
B: Look. (My bicycle/disappear) _____
A: (Where/you/leave/it?) _____
- 4 A: What's the matter with Paul?
B: (He/lose/his bag.) _____
A: (When/he/lose/it?) _____
- 5 A: What's that piece of paper?
B: It's my certificate. (I/pass/my exam) _____
A: (What mark/you/get?) _____

E Express these sentences in a different way. Use *just* or *a few minutes ago*.

- 0 Mary has just phoned. Mary phoned a few minutes ago.
- 1 Kathy came home a few minutes ago. _____
- 2 Colin has just finished his lunch. _____
- 3 Michael has just had a shower. _____
- 4 Jenny went to bed a few minutes ago. _____